PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF POLITICAL EVENTS AND PROCEDURES

Mrs. NEUBERGER. Mr. President, as public officials, we are concerned with public understanding of political events and procedures. Many have thought that if the public had a better understanding of the responsibilities and difficulties facing their legislators more effective government would result.

As a contribution to this political education, I ask unanimous consent that the following excerpt from the very informative book written by Charles L. Clapp, "The Congressman: His Work as He Sees It," be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the excerpt was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Christian Science Monitor, July 28, 1964]

THE CONGRESSMAN AND HIS WORLD

When a new Congressman comes to Washington to take his seat in the House of Representatives he finds that he is expected to make his own way in the political and legislative world. The House provides the newcomer with little guidance on the most important problems that concern him: how to obtain choice committee assignments, how to recruit a superior office staff, and what he can anticipate congressional life to be like.

Early in his career the Congressman also faces a difficult decision for which he is inadequately prepared. He finds he must choose between achieving a position of power and influence within the legislative body or seeking to affect public policy by issuing frequent pronouncements aimed at a larger, national audience.

* * * * *

Most Congressmen find that their office staffs are entirely occupied with district work and are not available to help on legislative problems. Mail is a heavy burden though it may be a source of ideas or a guide to voter sentiment. No Congressman dares ignore it, and all mail—no matter how bizarre the request, how snide the criticism, how stereotyped the comment—must be answered.

A second aspect of the difficulty of fulfilling legislative responsibilities effectively is the increasing complexity of public issues. One legislator commented:

I am appalled at how much Congressmen are expected to do for the Nation. We have to know too much. We have to make too many decisions. No matter how hardworking and conscientious a Congressman is, no matter how much homework he does, he just can't master these problems. We just don't have the time to keep informed properly.

* * * * *

In fulfilling his legislative role, the Congressman finds attendance at House sessions an important way to develop knowledge of House rules and parliamentary tactics, and to obtain background on some key issues that arise year after year. But as for the effectiveness of debate itself in determining final votes, the prevailing view is that few votes are swayed. "Most House Members will be more impressed by who is making a speech than by what is said on the subject."

Voting, the final act of the legislative role, is taken seriously, especially when a controversial issue is involved, but on many questions the vote itself does not always mean what it seems to mean. Measures may be passed by one body by large margins because of assurances that the other body will scuttle them.

* * * * *

One Member summed it up:

You've got to realize that not only are we sitting there trying to analyze legislation, trying to do the best job we can, but that factors other than absolute reason are always entering the situation. We are not * * * in an academic environment, secluded from pressures and other factors which may not be completely relevant to the situation at hand. We are operating in a political environment, surrounded by lobbyists, constituents, the leadership, and jangling telephones and we virtually have no time alone to think and reflect upon the problems before us. The big miracle is that somehow all of this works.

The committee system is the crux of the legislative process; a person's congressional career may rest largely on the kind of committee post he is given. Freshmen are likely to find the assignment procedure far more complex than they had expected.

In both parties, there is criticism that committee appointments are made in effect by the party leadership as part of a political strategy of their own making—by weaving together strands of regional and State demands, administration interests, committee chairmen's preferences, personal likes and dislikes, and occasionally the "rights" of seniority.

As a result, the factors influencing committee assignments are far from constant; perhaps the only certainty is that a good assignment is worth striving for, because it is in the committee rooms that the real work of Congress is done.

Committees are virtually atonomous bodies, hiring their own staffs, establishing their own rules of procedure, proceeding at their own pace for the most part and resisting, on occasion, the urgings of the leadership or the administration.

They work best in closed rather than open sessions, since partisan stances can often be sublimated and an atmosphere conducive to thought consideration of legislation is more likely to prevail.

* * * * *

Committee chairmen rank high among the most influential Members of Congress. Sometimes respected, sometimes feared, often criticized by their colleagues, the majority have learned well the traditional privileges of their station.

A chairman's power stems from his authority to call meetings (or not), to establish subcommittees (or not), to decide the order in which bills will be considered, to approve travel orders, to handle legislation on the floor.

* * * * *

It is in the area of committees rules of procedure that many Members think corrective action might be taken. "Rules of committees are designed to take the sting out of seniority and clip the wings of an arbitrary, negativist chairman," commented one man.

* * * * *

The leadership in the House is diffused—divided among elected leaders, Members who have risen to power by means of seniority, and a few individuals who are influential because of their personality and expertise although they do not enjoy official standing in the House or party hierarchy. In recent years, the formal instruments of leadership, such as the party caucus and the policy committee, have not been central elements in its exercise, although the Republicans are now according the conference and policy committee important responsibilities. The absence of official party apparatus that could give direction to the elected leaders has strengthened the hand of the Speaker and the majority leader, increasing their authority and freedom of action.

* * * * *

Congressmen find that the election process never ends. As one observed, "You should say 'perennial' election rather than 'biennial.' It's with us every day."

* * * * *

Regarding the chances for reelection, Members agree that incumbency is a great advantage. They feel that, by and large, State and local political groups do not concern themselves with congressional elections and that the two national committees are relatively useless. The large majority of Members accept the view that the "image" the voter has of the contestants is more important than the issues in determining the outcome: "The people back home don't know what's going on. Issues are not most important. * * * If voters feel the candidate is conscientious and is trying hard to serve them, then that man has a good chance of coming back."

In creating a favorable image, must a Representative follow the preferences of his district in voting, or does he have unusual latitude in making up his own mind? Opinions vary. One argument runs:

I think you can vote pretty nearly the way you want to vote on the issues. The people don't expect you to agree with them on every issue, and they respect you for arriving at your independent judgment. You must demonstrate that you are conscientious, however, and that you are able to arrive at a reasonable and intelligent judgment.

The other argument runs: "You cannot buck district sentiment on certain issues." Or, "A politician's first duty is to get reelected and I think this sometimes requires casting votes you might prefer not to cast."

To which is countered: "You are not just down here getting yourself reelected; you are here standing for a party which is supposed to have a definite philosophy." Or: "What good is it to be reelected if you are not willing to stand up on issues which are important."

In sum, Congressmen and congressional wives who participated in the Brookings study make clear that the life of a House Member is not an easy one. He works long hours but never can meet the many demands on his time. No matter how effective he is and how much he accomplishes, he can never satisfy all of his friends and constituents. He can seldom fully anticipate his schedule, being constantly subject to the whims of others. His job will not make him rich and the position he holds is not accorded the respect and deference by the public to which he thinks it entitled. Tension, if not conflict, is a dominant element in his life.

But after all the complaints have been aired, important compensations remain: the challenge of the work, prestige, and the satisfactions that come from active participation in important decisions of Government. Politics "gets in the blood," as one said. "There is an emotional excitement in being here," said another. "You are on the board of directors of a $100 billion a year corporation," said one. "Occasionally," said another, "perhaps just once or twice a session, you * * * are able to think of yourself as one tiny particle in the whole stream of history. * * * The hard work falls away, and the tension is relaxed, and you have a sense of purpose that I don't think you find in any other profession."

YESTERDAY'S NAVAL ENGAGEMENT OFF VIETNAM COAST

Mr. CHURCH. Mr. President, yesterday's naval engagement in the Gulf of Tonkin only underscores the fact that most of the American people continue to hope for a solution in South Vietnam which does not include an expansion of

the war outside the borders of that country, or a drastic extension of American military involvement in South Vietnam itself.

Those who have studied the Vietnamese situation realize that the problems to be met in that country are as much political and economic as they are military. We must continue to work to help the South Vietnamese Government develop the political and economic programs which will enable it to engender the popular support it needs to successfully prosecute the war.

As the New York Times commented editorially on July 29:

The new American buildup is a call to the South Vietnamese to buckle down to their real tasks at home, rather than to hope for a "simple" way out. Attacks on North Vietnam are less sure to end the war than they are to enlarge it and endanger the peace of the world.

Some of the articles and editorials on our situation in Vietnam and Asia which I have found relevant and worth while are: The editorial entitled "Reinforcing Vietnam" published in the July 29 New York Times; William F. Johnston's editorial entitled "The U.N. Looks at Vietnam," published in the Lewiston, Idaho, Morning Tribune; an editorial published in the Idaho State Journal entitled "The Campaign and Vietnam"; an editorial entitled "The Risk of War," which was published in the Washington Post; a letter written by C. F. Baldwin, U.S. Ambassador to Malaysia from 1961 to 1964, which was published in the Washington Post; and an editorial entitled "The Silver Flash," published in the Christian Science Monitor.

I ask unanimous consent to have these articles printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the editorials and the letter were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, July 29, 1964]

REINFORCING VIETNAM

The American military and civilian personnel buildup, which seems to take the United States deeper into the war in South Vietnam, is intended to do just the opposite. The policy it is designed to further is one of denying southeast Asia to communism without involving American troops in major combat—of containing agression within South Vietnam, rather than extending the war to the north.

That policy is in serious trouble. But its chief architect, General Taylor, has become its chief administrator as the American Ambassador in Saigon. And he now is being given a major increase in personnel, as originally recommended by Ambassador Lodge and the Honolulu conference in June, to see if the existing policy can be made to work.

The buildup, which will bring a one-third rise in the 16,000 American troops in Vietnam, will put more American military advisers into the fieled alongside more Vietnamese battalion and militia commanders. It will also station more American civilian advisers in the provinces to help improve Vietnamese administration in agriculture, health, economic development, and social aid.

There should be useful side effects. The American commitment to South Vietnam, if ever doubted by Hanoi and Peiping, now has been retsated in an unmistakable way. And there should be a lift for sagging morale in South Vietnam. In recent weeks this dip in morale has brought General Khanh under pressure from the important army elements, some of which want to extend the war to the North.

To appease this sentiment, to project a more martial image to discontented civilian leaders and, perhaps, to test how far Washington might be pushed, Saigon's Premier recently has been urging a "march to the north," knowing that it would be suicide without large-scale American support. That advocacy, repeated again yesterday, has brought General Khanh into conflict with Ambassador Taylor. And President Johnson last week made it clear that while "provocation [from North Vietnam] could force a response," the United States "seeks no wider war."

The new American buildup is a call to the South Vietnamese to buckle down to their real tasks at home, rather than to hope for a "simple" way out. Attacks on North Vietnam are less sure to end the war than they are to enlarge it and endanger the peace of the world.

[From the Lewiston (Idaho) Morning Tribune, July 9, 1964]

THE U.N. LOOKS AGAIN AT VIETNAM

A whole series of diplomatic developments have focused renewed emphasis upon the possibility of United Nations intervention in the war in Vietnam.

Secretary-General U Thant's call yesterday for a new Geneva conference on the war was significant, both on its own account and in relation to other trends around the world.

If the parties involved in the war could reach an agreement, Thant said, the U.N. could play a role in seeing that the agreement was carried out. "Even at this late hour," he said, some means might be found to end the war.

Thant's proposal was aired on the same day that Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev accused the United States of "waging a murderous war of aggression" in South Vietnam. He said that "interference by aggressive imperialist powers may kindle a war fraught with dangerous consequences." He repeated that the Soviet Union is opposed to "aggressive, predatory wars," but supports "wars of national liberation, wars when oppressed people rise against their oppressors, colonialists, and imperialists." Such wars as there, he said, "we regard as sacred. We support the people who take up arms and uphold their independence and freedom, and we support them not only in words, but by concrete deeds."

While Khrushchev may well change the tone of his warnings within a week or a month, his statement seems to deflate considerably the U.S. hope that he is not much interested in supporting the Chinese Communists in Vietnam and Laos. American policy in southeast Asia is linked to an important degree to the hope that the Soviet Union would not underwrite in a showdown the Chinese design to conquer southeast Asia for communism. America's vital interests as a Pacific power are involved in the struggle to prevent the fall of southeast Asia to world communism. The fateful decision may have to be made to risk war even with the Soviet Union if necessary to prevent such a calamity. But Khrushchev's statement would seem to intensify the risks.

Another potentially significant development was the Soviet proposal Tuesday to establish a permanent U.N. military force to intervene when necessary to prevent small wars from expanding into big ones. The objective here is of crucial importance to the preservation of peace. The methods proposed by the Soviet Union contain dangerous booby traps. The Soviets' insistence that the U.N. Security Council would have to approve the assignment of the U.N. force to any arena of conflict naturally would give Russia a veto power over such actions—and this would be unacceptable to the Western Powers. However, the proposal may indicate a Soviet willingness to begin looking realistically at a problem of fundamental importance. Possibly—just possibly—the proposal could be modified through negotiation to provide a start toward an effective U.N. peacekeeping force.

Meanwhile, in the United States, some of the Senate's most thoughtful and best informed students of foreign affairs have been warning that the United States must reconsider its unilateral role in Vietnam. Senator J. W. FULBRIGHT, chairman, and Senator FRANK CHURCH, a member, of the Foreign Relations Committee, for example, have urged this country to try again to bring the U.N. into the explosive southeast Asia situation. They have reminded that France suffered 75,000 casualties trying to defend Vietnam from Communist conquest and finally failed. They have questioned the right of the United States to assume the authority to intervene with military force in a situation which is only partly a war of external aggression and in large part a civil war.

These Senators have not offered conclusive answers, of course. If there were a simple, entirely right solution to the Vietnam problems it would have been discovered years ago. Every course the United States might choose is dangerous. The U.N. is not equipped to go beyond the supervision of a negotiated agreement, as Thant made clear. Any negotiated agreement is likely to be just a way station along the route of the Communists' determined march to conquer all of southeast Asia.

Nor does it necessarily follow that the U.S. policy of unilateral intervention with major force is entirely incompatible with a long-range hope for U.N. intervention. Perhaps the U.N. could not intervene effectively until the Communist powers were fully convinced that the United States is willing to risk global war if necessary to protect its stake in Asia.

In any event, new developments seem to be reviving the possibilities of U.N. involvement in Vietnam. The developments should be watched closely by Americans. The country at least can hope that political oratory at home during the coming campaign season will not distort or oversimplify the complex issues of the dilemma of southeast Asia.

[From the Idaho State Journal, June 26, 1964]

THE CAMPAIGN AND VIETNAM

When Henry Cabot Lodge said the other day he didn't see how the war in South Vietnam could be an issue in the presidential campaign, he was indulging in wishful thinking. The issue already has been injected into the campaign by Senator BARRY GOLDWATER and Gov. William Scranton, and Americans can expect it to be brought up repeatedly and with a good deal of fervor. What voters should weigh carefully is how much blame can and cannot be assessed in a situation in which we have not made a total war effort.

The American people and especially the leaders of the political opposition are fond of demanding total victory in any military venture in which this country is engaged. After defeating powerful enemies in two controversial world wars, we want no partial victories and no standoffs, even in unconventional engagements far from our own shores.

The battle in South Vietnam is different from any we have been involved in before. As described by a reporter who covered it, the war "flashes like heat lightning across the landscape," breaking out now here and now there, even to the gates of and inside Saigon itself. Crafty Communist forces strike out quickly and are as quickly gone, sometimes carrying away their dead to conceal their losses. The Vietcong enemy is a smart and elusive fighter, well-armed and

thoroughly indoctrinated in a program at the village level of many years standing.

Many of our Vietnamese friends, on the other hand, care little about what kind of system they live under. They have scant conception of freedom and they do not feel much allegiance to a central government. It is to this kind of ally we have sent some 16,000 military men and some 200 civilians to distribute aid, to train and to advise. Obviously, this has not been enough to drive the Communists out of South Vietnam, and we will be hearing about this failure in the months before November and possibly long after that.

What have been some of the alternatives? We could have sent many more fighting men and poured many more millions of dollars into the battle, and we may yet do it, if the appointment of a distinguished general as ambassador to South Vietnam is any indication. We could have pushed the war into North Vietnam and thus risked the intervention of Communist China and the Soviet Union, and we may yet do that. Or we could have embarked upon a massive educational and indoctrinational program of our own, sending far more than a paltry 200 civilians into the field to work closely with the Vietnamese people.

Some of these measures would require far greater expenditures of blood and resources than we have been willing to commit, as Ambassador Lodge pointed out, under the Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson administrations. The educational program undoubtedly would take years to show results.

We are thus faced with a situation about which it is easy for candidates to demand explanations for failure. At the same time, it is not easy to suggest solutions that will not require far greater outlays of men and money and the acceptance of far greater risks. And it should be remembered that the candidates who demand the explanations do not bear the responsibility for formulating and carrying out policy and accepting the risks.

The debate on the Vietnam issue, then, should be watched closely not only for the criticism it will bring but for the definite alternatives that should be suggested if the debate is to be meaningful and valid and informative to the American people.

[From the Washington Post, June 30, 1964]

THE RISK OF WAR

President Johnson plainly intended in his Minneapolis address to present a double emblem of American policy in southeast Asia—the emblem of the olive branch no less than the sheaf of arrows. Inescapably, news accounts focused on the arrows, because for the first time the President has said in public what his aids have been stressing in private. "Today, as always," Mr. Johnson said, "if a nation is to keep its freedom it must be prepared to risk war."

Assuredly, the President has a double purpose in emphasizing the very real hazard of war in southeast Asia. The first is to drive home to Hanoi and Peiping the earnestness of American warnings, which have already been conveyed in a multitude of other ways. And the second is to prepare American opinion for the possibility that once again American forces may be involved in a major military venture on the Asian mainland.

Yet if the President's mind was fixed on the need to make clear U.S. determination, his heart was obviously in statements intended to make equally clear U.S. restraint. He opened and closed with Biblical references, and his final quotation—"Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God"—was scarcely the theme one would expect in a purely bellicose call to arms.

The parallel that Mr. Johnson has in mind in viewing southeast Asia is the Cuban missile crisis. "We do not advance the cause of freedom by calling on the full might of our military to solve every problem," he said. "We won a great victory in Cuba because we stood firm without using force."

It might be useful to ask, however, whether this comparison does not show the special peril of the present impasses. After all, throughout the Cuban crisis the United States was in constant direct contact with its Soviet adversaries; moreover, the confrontation took place against a clearer understanding of Soviet purposes and tactics gained through realistic on-the-spot appraisals.

In dealing with Peiping and Hanoi, the United States enjoys no such experience of direct contact and must use diplomatic mirrors to assure that signals from Washington reach hostile capitals. This is one melancholy consequence of a sterile policy of nonrecognition which has cut us off from firsthand knowledge and has made direct communication impossible.

In stressing American desire for peace, the President must at some time become more specific in demonstrating that this country is willing to go to a conference table no less than to the battlefield, if there is some indication of a desire for accommodation in Peiping or Hanoi. It is in elaborating just this possibility that the President can draw on the lessons of the Cuban missile crisis. For our Communist adversaries, no less than ourselves, must be given a third option between the choices of all-out conflict or wholesale surrender.

FOR HEARTS AND MINDS

Southeast Asia has become the proving ground of American staying power and wisdom. To achieve its objectives there, the United States will require patience, dogged determination, and wise and realistic planning, based upon knowledge of the area and its people, and devoid of wishful thinking.

To one who has lived recently in southeast Asia much of the discussion about a possible neutralist solution of the problem there, derived from a political settlement, contains a good deal of wishful thinking. The hope for such a solution seems to rest partly upon a belief in the intimidating effect of our 7th Fleet, and partly upon an assumption that the schism in the Communist world would make the solution acceptable to both the Soviet Union and Communist China.

The 7th Fleet undoubtedly is a deterrent to Communist aggression. However, it is far from certain that the influence of American power in the Far East is likely to pave the way for a political settlement in which the Communist Chinese will join so long as the Chinese are continuing to make gains. Why should they negotiate when, in both Vietnam and Laos, they are able to keep us in a position which is awkward, difficult, and dangerous, to say the least?

While the outcome of the struggle between the rival Communist camps may well strongly influence developments in southeast Asia there is little support for the belief, or hope, that Communist Chinese expansionism there will be reduced—or postponed—by the ideological conflict between the Chinese and the Soviets.

A more logical expectation is that possession of some of the southeast Asian countries may be even more attractive to the Chinese Communists as a means of strengthening their position vis-a-vis the Soviets. Moreover, to expect that a neutralist arrangement covering those small and relatively weak nations would effectively protect them against Communist China is like expecting the lambs to lie securely with the wolf after the shepherd has left.

Unfortunately, the discussion of military alternatives available to us in Vietnam seems to have obscured the importance of the essential objective there. In 1962, a leading Asian nationalist leader, strongly and ardently anti-Communist, told President Diem that, regardless of the amount of American aid which he might receive, the Communists would win in Vietnam unless the effort to win the sympathy of the Vietnamese people for the anti-Communist cause succeeded.

He pointed out that the slogan of "winning the minds and hearts of the people" had become the watchword of the 12-year-long struggle against Communist guerrillas in Malaya and that a longer time would have been needed to defeat the guerrillas if that objective had not been given top priority by Malaya's defenders. Before we face the dangerous alternatives of military escalation or presenting the Communists with the great population and wealth of southeast Asia—or rather to avoid facing those alternatives, we should make certain that every possible effort has been made to turn the sympathies of the Vietnamese people against the Communists. That can only be done by the Vietnamese people themselves, but the training of local people to do the job, and the financing of it, will require outside assistance.

The effort should be massive. It might require 2 years to build the kind of Vietnamese peace corps that will be needed and more years to produce the fruits of the corps' efforts, but the cost in time, effort, and money would be negligible compared to the cost and risk of military escalation.

It would, of course, be necessary to hold the military position and provide military protection of the country while the massive effort to win hearts and minds was being made. Once the tide against the Communists began to turn in Malaya the military pressure was steadily increased, but it was always regarded by such wise men as Gen. Sir Gerald Templar, who directed the entire antiguerrilla campaign at its peak, as only one part of the job.

A similar view has not always been held by the military minds directing the struggle against the Communists in Vietnam and the consequences are unpleasantly evident today. However, it is not too late to profit from the experience of others. We should never forget that it is not only victory in Vietnam which is important, but the manner in which victory is won. The basic struggle is for hearts and minds, not just territory.

C. F. BALDWIN.

[From the Christian Science Monitor]

THE SILVER FLASH

Airplanes are not the solution to the U.S. dilemma in Asia. They can help. Under certain circumstances they might tip the balance. But they cannot occupy a country. They cannot even locate guerrillas. They are not a primary method of warfare in Asia.

These facts need to be firmly stated and understood. There is a grave danger that factions in Washington led by the Air Force, and factions in the country led by those who think an easy show of force would stop Communist China, will create a delusion: that the Communists can be stopped in a nice, safe, sanitary, inexpensive, gallant fashion by sending aviators to do the job. A whiff of bombs, a flurry of air-to-ground rockets and the enemy would cave in.

There is no rational basis for this belief. It is the same zealous, uncritical fascination with the airplane that predicted victories by air in World War II and the Korean war, neither of which eventuated. In the Korean war in particular, airpower fell drastically short of predictions. It is customary to blame this on lack of permission to bomb beyond the Yalu. But in tests like Operation Strangle where the United States had full and uncontested command of the air, it was unable to stop the mount-

ing by the Chinese of a major and very damaging ground operation.

As for full strategic bombing of mainland China that is another story. It would have to be judged with another standard of effectiveness than tactical air strikes, and in the light of the possibility that it would launch World War III.

The occasion for these statements is a dispatch from a correspondent of this newspaper in southeast Asia. He reports that the Communists "apparently are convinced that the techniques they have evolved over 40 years—what they call 'people's revolutionary war'—cannot be defeated no matter how sophisticated and advanced a system of weapons and military technology is brought to bear on the struggle."

This is the challenge. It was compared by Henry Cabot Lodge with having a battleship and needing to do a job in the desert. There should be no illusions about the fact that guerrilla war on the terms set by the Communists will take a heavy commitment of resources, ground and air, and that no bright flash of silver in the air can win a quick victory and return home.

CREATION OF PROPOSED MULTILATERAL NUCLEAR FORCE (MLF)

Mr. CHURCH. Mr. President, the creation of the proposed Multilateral Nuclear Force (MLF) is a major foreign policy step, one which could have lasting effect on our relations with our Western European allies, the Soviet bloc, and our conduct of arms control negotiations.

If an MLF treaty is to be presented to this body in the near future, there is great need to have an adequate discussion of the merits of the proposal before the time of requested ratification.

Up to now, there has been little discussion about the MLF, either in the Congress or in the press. Recently, Murrey Marder, the distinguished diplomatic correspondent of the Washington Post, wrote a worthwhile feature on the MLF which explored some of the problems connected with this proposal. I ask unanimous consent to have this article printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, July 19, 1964]

POLITICS CAN BUFFET NUCLEAR FLEET—TARGET DATE FOR MULTILATERAL FORCE PUTS MANEUVERING BETWEEN EUROPE AND UNITED STATES IN THICK OF CAMPAIGN

(By Murrey Marder)

Out of the Cow Palace last week came a theme that will reverberate in discord against some of the most sensitive strings of U.S. foreign policy, including its nuclear strategy.

That was the intention of Senator BARRY M. GOLDWATER: to present an alternative to "me-toolsm" in both domestic and foreign affairs.

No matter how American voters react in November to the Republican choice for President and his determination to launch a bolder, more-risk-taking brand of foreign policy, Senator GOLDWATER'S nomination itself may have some effect on the current policies of America's allies.

Since World War II, American political nominations have little impact on the world's foreign policies. Even after the subsequent election, because of "me-toolsm," or what others prefer to call "bipartisanship," friend and foe alike usually expect no drastic upsets if the White House changes hands. That assumption is now gone.

THE LONG VIEW

No matter how convinced they may be that President Johnson will win reelection, foreign offices around the world now are obliged to take a more serious look at Senator GOLDWATER'S candidacy. They may well conclude that his nomination alone will have no great impact on American policy but they undoubtedly will be reexamining their positions on ventures that would take years to develop.

A current major project fits that classification, although few Americans have more than the haziest notion of it. One simple reason is its official name, Multilateral Nuclear Force (MLF), which opponents deride as a multilateral nuclear "farce."

Despite the bureaucratically obscure title, the plan touches the nerve ends of West Germany's nuclear future; Britain's, Italy's, and other European nations' political and military evolution; the development of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; the struggle between the United States and French President De Gaulle over the shape of Western Europe and its relationship to the United States, and the prospects for East-West arms control and disarmament.

TWENTY-FIVE NUCLEAR WARSHIPS

All this is imbedded in a debate that has been going on for 4 years in allied foreign offices over the creation of a fleet of 25 surface ships armed with 200 nuclear-tipped Polaris missiles, to be jointly financed, manned, controlled, and operated by those allied nations that can be induced to join. It would be assigned to NATO's defense.

Its cost would be about $2.5 billion to launch, about $160 million a year to operate, with the United States and West Germany as the main contributors.

It is a "first step" plan. On that one point, its supporters and critics agree. They disagree totally on what it is a first step toward.

Its advocates now have the positive support of President Johnson, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, and all the machinery of the U.S. Government, plus the backing of many of the leaders of Western Europe. They see it as a force for Atlantic unity and as a way of checking the spread of nuclear weapons by assuaging any German military appetite for a greater voice in the use of nuclear power. They believe that it will accomplish other long-range gains without risk to other nations.

Its critics, here and abroad, are not organized and are relatively weak, but they are counting on British and Italian hesitation over the plan and they hope affirmatively to build a backfire on Capitol Hill that will cause President Johnson at least to delay it.

To these opponents, who include foreign policy, scientific and military specialists and political leaders on both sides of the Atlantic, including Johnson administration officials who are now in a distinct minority, the mixed-manned nuclear fleet could do exactly the opposite of what its supporters claim.

They say that it is more likely to intensify than diminish German and other nuclear ambitions, to hasten the fragmentation of the Atlantic Alliance, to damage arms control and disarmament prospects, to impede the growth of national independence inside the Soviet bloc and to cause other harm.

What makes this backstage Allied debate of special consequence now is the time factor.

Orginally a mere suggestion by Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy, the plan got more active Kennedy backing after the 1962 Anglo-American conference at Nassau and De Gaulle's subsequent rejection of British entry into the Common Market.

As one American critic puts it, the MLF "made the long leap from the technical to the policy level" when, "to counter De Gaulle, the United States felt obliged to assert its leadership, especially in the ultrasensitive politicomilitary area where De Gaulle himself might move."

Last month, the communique issued after President Johnson's meeting with West German Chancellor Ludwig Erhard set an official target date: to try to get the MLF pact ready for signature "by the end of the year" so it might be presented to Congress in 1965 as a treaty or in other legislative form.

LESS THAN A SOLUTION

Since October 1963, a working group representing the United States, West Germany, Britain, Italy, Holland, Greece and Turkey has been examining the plan in Paris. Additional political talks have gone on in Washington and other capitals.

None of these nations is officially committed to it but support for it is growing steadily, not as a cureall but, as one critic-turned-supporter described it, "as the least damaging way of mitigating the absence of a solution."

Some would join, notably West Germany, because of deep belief in it. Others, like Britain, might join only to avoid missing the boat. They would want to prevent Germany from being its dominant European partner. Still others are interested for a combination of these reasons.

This creates what amounts to an international squeeze play on joining. If Britain does not join, or if Italy does not, the plan will go ahead anyway, American planners maintain. They also would like to raise the ante in this diplomatic poker game by suggesting that the United States might go ahead without both Britain and Italy. But that is not official policy.

The critical maneuvering period between now and the end of the year will parallel the presidential election campaign, and this coincidence is important because the ultimate shape of the mixed-manned fleet depends on long-range American foreign policy.

THE QUESTION OF A VETO

Initially, at least, the United States would have a veto over the use of the fleet's nuclear weapons, because they could be fired only by unanimous agreement. But Mr. Johnson said as Vice President that "evolution of this fleet toward European control, as Europe marches toward unity, is by no means excluded."

Administration officials have assured congressional leaders, however, that ultimate surrender of the American veto has never been even implied. There are other ways of widening European control without touching the veto, they have noted.

Now with Senator GOLDWATER a nominee, political charges that he is irresponsible and "shoots from the hip" tend to underline among Europeans De Gaulle's charges that American foreign policy is unpredictable. This reaction is bothering administration officials.

Senator GOLDWATER has made some criticism of the MLF concept of a nuclear force with mixed crews, but he has not yet been briefed on it by MLF proponents. He advocates a direct NATO nuclear force under NATO's Supreme Commander in Europe, who is an American. Nevertheless, his variable comments about giving NATO greater authority to fire tactical nuclear weapons, and his remark that Germany might have won both World Wars with stronger military leadership, frighten Europeans, even some who want more authority over nuclear weapons.

It is not odd that Senator GOLDWATER'S position on the MLF is not well known. One Congressman who has followed it closely estimates that not more than a dozen Members in both Houses have more than a superficial knowledge of the plan, although